

FOCUS *newsletter*

SPRING 2020

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First Lutheran
CHURCH
where faith and life meet

Pastors' Pen

The church year is marked by seasons. There are lengths of time to wonder and wait. There are times that swell with celebration. It is these seasons that invite us into the story of God. The season of Lent is one of those seasons. It is a time to go deeper as people of faith.

This Lenten season we hope to experience the mystery and profound hope of Christ in new ways together. As we journey to the cross, we will use Adam Hamilton's book *The Walk: Five Practices of the Christian Life* as our guide. Through worship, small groups, meals, and studies, we will revisit our faith with a renewed sense of purpose and go deeper into the basics of the Christian faith: Worship and Prayer, Study, Service, Giving, and Sharing.

All worship services throughout the week will follow our Lenten theme and the sermon will be the same at each service. See our worship schedule on the following page for further details.

Here are some ways to engage beyond worship:

- Soup Suppers February 26th to April 1st from 4:45pm-6pm.
- Purchase the book, *The Walk*, in the church office to use as a personal devotion and for small and large group study opportunities.
- A number of small groups book studies will be meeting. Sign up by March 8 by the Welcome

Center to learn and grow along with other folks from First Lutheran.

- Brown Bag Lunch Large Group Study: On Wednesdays at 12:00pm from March 4-April 1, we will meet in the Gathering Space to discuss the weekly theme. Bring your lunch! No need to sign up for this study.

Our prayer is that in this season of the church year we would grow in our faith together, that we would follow the path of discipleship together, and that through Christ's dying and rising we would make our way into the newness of life that he promises for all. This season of Lent, we are going for a walk. We'd love for you to come along.

Lent Soup Suppers

Join us for Wednesday soup suppers throughout the season of Lent. These meals will be served by the youth attending the summer houseboat trip and proceeds from the meals will be going toward this youth trip.

- 2/29/20 - Broccoli Cheese & Chicken Dumpling
- 3/4/20 - Potato & Minestrone
- 3/11/20 - Tomato & Beef Vegetable
- 3/18/20 - Clam Chowder & Chicken Noodle
- 3/25/20 - Beef Barley & Potato Bacon
- 4/1/20 - Gumbo and Chicken Wild Rice

Lent

ASH WEDNESDAY: THE WALK

Worship February 26
12:00PM & 6:15PM

LENT 1: WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Worship February 29 - March 4
Saturday 5:00PM | Sunday 8:30AM & 10:00PM | Wednesday 6:15PM

LENT 2: STUDY

Worship March 7 - March 11
Saturday 5:00PM | Sunday 8:30AM & 10:00PM | Wednesday 6:15PM

LENT 3: SERVE

Worship March 14 - March 18
Saturday 5:00PM | Sunday 8:30AM & 10:00PM | Wednesday 6:15PM

LENT 4: GIVE

Worship March 21 - March 25
Saturday 5:00PM | Sunday 8:30AM & 10:00PM | Wednesday 6:15PM

LENT 5: SHARE

Worship March 28 - April 1
Saturday 5:00PM | Sunday 8:30AM & 10:00PM | Wednesday 6:15PM

Palm
Sunday
Weekend

SATURDAY, APRIL 4
5:00PM

SUNDAY, APRIL 5
8:30AM & 10:00AM

Maundy
Thursday

THURSDAY, APRIL 9
12:00PM
6:15PM

Good
Friday

FRIDAY, APRIL 10
12:00PM - Joint ELCA Worship
at First Lutheran
6:15PM - Good Friday Worship

Easter Worship

SATURDAY, APRIL 11
5:00PM - Traditional Easter worship with communion

SUNDAY, APRIL 12
6:30AM - Sunrise Easter worship with communion
8:30AM - Traditional Easter worship with communion
10:30AM - Celebration Easter worship with communion

NOTE NEW EASTER
WORSHIP TIMES!!



VBS SERVANT SPOTLIGHT

“I like to help with VBS because it gives me a chance to spend time with my daughter and I get to see my grandchildren enjoying the week with their friends. Also, because we do the crafts, it's fun to explore that creative aspect.” *Bette Mattson*

“Watching how much the Children and Helpers interact & learn about God's Word in such a positive way (through lessons, singing, games & crafts). Bless the organizers.” *Lee H*

“I'd say being around the high energy and enthusiasm. Its organized well going from station to station. The music, the Pastors skits all make it a joyful time!” - *Becky Gray*

“Seeing the energy and excitement of the kids! VBS keeps you young. Being able to give back to the kids

and First Lutheran Church.”
- *Bruce and Jodi Belseth*

“I really enjoy the enthusiasm and energy that everyone involved with VBS brings with them. The staff, the leaders, the kids, are all great to be around!”
- *Dave Barnett*

“I so enjoyed helping with VBS last year. I loved watching the kids enter and scoot off to the sanctuary to meet their friends and teachers. They got to see skits with their pastors being silly and sing fun songs. I think every day they liked it better and better because of the fun activities and everyone just connecting so well.” - *Glee Domschot*



VBS 2020

Monday, June 8 - Thursday, June 11 | 8:30-11:30am

Ages 3 - 5th grade | Registration begins May 1

At Rocky Railway VBS, kids discover that trusting Jesus pulls them through life's ups and downs. At Rocky Railway kids participate in memorable Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, touch and even taste! Fun projects, team-building games, catchy Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the standout activities that help faith and life meet. Registration Opens May 1 and closes May 25. Watch in the weeks to come for further information.

This is a great intergenerational activity that all are invited to be part of.

Volunteers can sign-up by contacting Randi Rach or filling out the volunteer information online. This year's VBS supported mission will be the Car Care Program of Alexandria. A free will donation will be accepted at registration for preschool - 5th grade for the week's activities. Sign up to volunteer here... vbspro.events/p/flcalex2020



Stepping Out in Faith

Janice Hartwig shares the story of creating paraments for our new church building.

Trying something new isn't always an easy task. Yet sometimes it's when we step out in faith that we see the most amazing results!

When Janice Hartwig was first approached by Pastor Greg Billberg to consider creating the new paraments for our new church building, she was a bit apprehensive. "I had never done anything like this before and wanted it to be perfect for my church home and family. I was asked that the new paraments be created with modern and bold colors to match the beautiful colors of our new stained glass window." Janice had previously created some pieces for Pastor Greg years ago, which made her an obvious option when considering who would be a good fit for creating these new pieces for our church. However, it still required a leap of faith for this experienced seamstress and former business owner. She knew these creations were a brand new concept for our congregation because they are so different from anything we've seen in the past. Yet the

congregation's positive feedback has been one of her favorite parts in this process. And while it's Janice's gift for sewing that brings these paraments to life, she is quick to point out that it is a team effort that has made this all possible. "This process has been so amazing because of all the collaboration throughout. Ideas have been shared and for each new concept. Everyone has been a pleasure to work with." Janice is also quick to point out that her husband, Gene, gives her helpful feedback and buys all of the fabric for her and that her 23 year old grandson, Andrew, even likes to share his thoughts on her creations.

Creating the new paraments in our new building has added so much beauty to our already stunning sanctuary and it's all because of one person's willingness to step out in her faith and share her gifts with our church family.



Community Preschool

Community Preschool is blessed to have a wonderful storyteller come to visit our classroom on a regular basis. The connection between Mailman Roger (Roger Schultz) and our preschoolers is heart-warming. Roger brings the importance of reading to children to life. Children benefit from being read to in many ways. Reading expands vocabulary and language, strengthens concentration, assists in developing a child's imagination and helps a child develop empathy to name just a few of those benefits. We also like to promote positive relationships between generations and our Christian family. Thank you Roger for loving our kiddos. We look forward to Kathryn Rothman joining our classroom to share her love of storytelling to the children.



Legacy Outdoor Worship

Sundays, May 24 - September 6 | 10:00am

Invite a friend and join us again this summer for outdoor worship at Legacy of the Lakes Museum Gardens, rain or shine! It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with God, with one another, and with God's creation in a meaningful way. This worship venue will once again allow us to continue in our mission to connect faith and life through worship, learning and serving in Jesus' name. The Legacy Gardens offers

a beautiful, welcoming and accessible location for both our congregation and the community. Please contact the church office to sponsor a Sunday at the Legacy Gardens! A \$200 sponsorship will allow us to underwrite costs associated with worship and hospitality. Bring your own chair or we will provide one for you. We look forward to seeing you at the Legacy Gardens!



Summer Worship Schedule

SATURDAYS
5:00PM | First Lutheran Church

SUNDAYS
8:30AM | First Lutheran Church
10:00AM | Legacy of the Lakes
10:30AM | Carlos State Park

Take Stock

March 7 - March 15 | Before & After Worship | Gathering Space

The congregation is invited to buy "shares of stock" for this Youth Ministry fundraiser. Shares are \$20/share. People can buy as many shares as they want or give a cash donation in the amount they choose. This summer our youth are going up to Crane Lake in Northern MN on a Houseboat trip. We have 54 students registered. Thank you for your continued support. We could not do the ministry without you.

Writing Workshop

Thursdays, May 7, 14, 21 | 1:00-3:00pm | Room 1B

Mara Faulkner, OSB, a retired English professor from St. Ben's will again be leading this class. All writers and abilities are welcome. We will try out several different ways of putting our experiences into words that will reach across the generations (memoir, letters, poetry, hybrid forms, etc.). Sign up by April 29 at the Welcome Center.

Community Picnic

Wed, May 13 | 4:30-6:15 | FLC

All are welcome to join us for this community event! Join us outside for hot dogs, beans, potato salad, chips and rootbeer floats followed by outdoor worship.

Israel/Jordan Trip

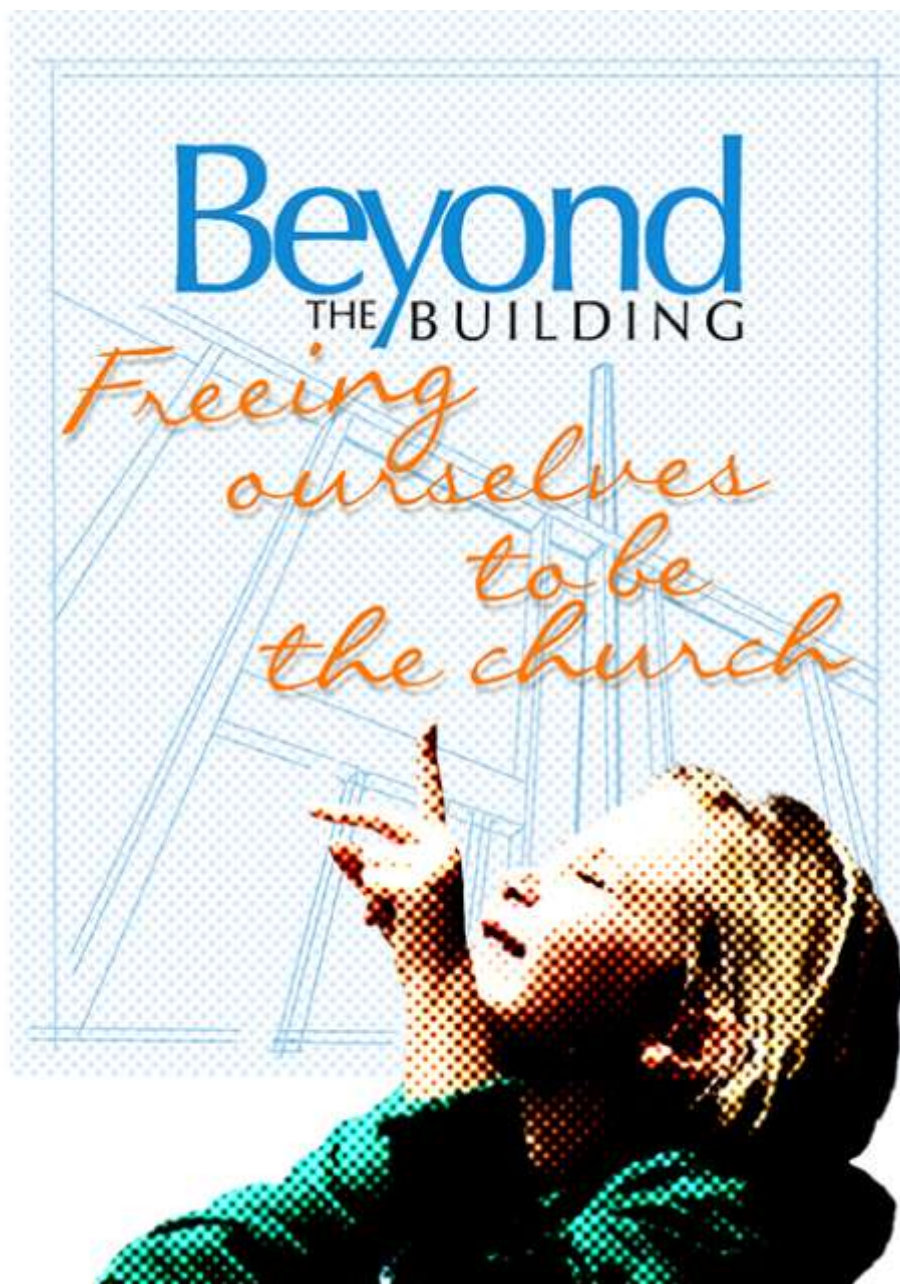
October 26-November 7

Join us for one of the most meaningful travel experiences you will ever take. To learn more, pick up a brochure from the display next to the Welcome Center, call Pastor Greg or contact Bursch Travel. Your reservation can be made through Bursch Travel at 320.762.1544.

Reservations are taken on a first come, first serve basis and we are expecting a great response!

Your Mission Dollars at Work

Your mission dollars have been working with West Central Communities Action and we've given money to support housing for homeless families. We had the Advent of Gratitude project that supported the Launch Pad, which will house two homeless families. We raised \$4,385 plus people donated all the items to furnish those two housing units. Global missions has been a concern and we used \$500 to support Maggie Pfeffer's bead project, which buys livestock for Kenyan families. We also gave \$500 to the Bulls and Billy Goats Project, which buys livestock for families in Kenya. We also brought five carloads of coats and winter clothing to the United Way.



Beyond the Building

Hasn't it been exciting to see the spirit at work here at First Lutheran in so many new and dynamic ways? The *Beyond the Building* theme of our new capital campaign captures our goal of freeing ourselves to be the church by significantly reducing our debt on our new building.

It's time to celebrate how far we've come, as well as an opportunity for us to reinvest ourselves in the future of First Lutheran as we prayerfully consider our 3-year commitment to the *Beyond the Building* campaign. We are so grateful for the many young individuals, couples and families that bring life and vitality to our congregation. As we have said many times before every person and every gift matters.

We will be kicking off our campaign in April the weekend of April 18-19 with commitment services happening on May 16, 17 and 20.

MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

Memorial gifts are a meaningful way to convey sympathy to the bereaved and acknowledge the loss of a loved one. They are another way that we give thanks to God for the ways we have been blessed. Gifts may be designated to a particular fund or left undesignated, which allows them to be used for special projects and areas of greatest need.

BUILDING FUND

In memory of Tim Radil, given by Gary & Judith Gease, Arlou Schwendemann, John & Margaret Schroeder, John & Marie Stellner, Lillian Anderson, Dan & Deb Loken, DiAnn Ness, Darrell & Margaret Kalina, Elaine Kuhnau, Ruth Nelson, Carol Radil, Linda Zismer, Family and Friends

In memory of Marjorie Thompson, given by Elizabeth Hiebel
In memory of Gloria Whiting, given by Darrel & Margaret Kalina
In memory of Don Schlapkohl, given by Gene & Jackie Harstad

In memory of Hunter Schultz, given by Ruth Nelson

In memory of Dan Zismer, given by Glenda Seela, Thomas & Kari van Wakeren, Dianna Anderson, Greg & Val Trumm, Dave & Alice Anderson, Gary & Bette Mattson, John & Margaret Schroeder, Jerry & Joyce Hansen, Sheryl & Roger Bakewell, Glee Domschot, Roger & Carol Kirsch, Randy & Mary Morken, Elaine Kuhnau, Stan & Helen Johnsrud, Jeff & Kathryn Arnold, Junnell Widmark, Don & Bernice Trousil, Mary Norlien, LeRoy & Rochelle Gulbranson, Randy & Jan Gilbertson, Ruth Osterberg, Mike & Sue Kjelland, Kirk & Joanne Bliese, Gary & Nancy Ekdahl, Larry & Jane Halverson, Lynn & Mary Ackerman, Steve & Ginger Polman, Keith & Becky Gilbertson, Roger & Vicky Hermes, Bob & Kim Taylor, Mackenzie Shulter, James & Marilyn Johnson, Marcia Gae Schmitt, Marie Stellner, Jane Kasmaker, Dennis & Bonnie Miller, David & Becky Gray
In memory of Delmer Pomeranz, given by Leroy & Wanda Karrow

In memory of Marvin Iverson, given by Darlene Iverson, David & Loretta Lundy, Wayne & Linnea Erickson, Kathryn Trombley, Alan & Kathy Patton, Friends & Family

In memory of Joseph Syvrud, given by Ruth Nelson, Roger & Sheryl Bakewell, DiAnn Ness

In memory of Ophelia Moen, given by John & Jan Lervick

In memory of John Schroeder, given by Brian & Jody Mesko, Greg & Val Trumm, De Wayne & Dorothy Bisek, Sandy Doege, Doug & Patricia Kuiper, Roger & Carol Thalman, Dianna Anderson, Orin & Lois Lundberg, Deb Hokanson, Greg Tvrdik, Lois Wambheim, Stan & Helen

Johnsrud, Bret & Karen Brazel, Rich & Eileen Eiser, Linda Zismer, David & Loretta Lundy, LaVina Larson, David & Lola Anderson, Faith Annis, David & Cheryl Larson, Ron & Kathryn Clayton, Dave & Evie Harris, Lloyd & Dianne Schwanke, Gene & Janice Hartwig, William & Donna Luckemeyer, Lowell & Diane Hjelle, Donald & Judith Johnson, Junnell Widmark, Stephen & Shana Shurson, Allen & Coty Lund, Jeanette Ollig, Jenny Trumm, Michael & Miriam Svobodny, Rick & Diane Ziegler, John & Marie Stellner, Franklin & Mary Starke, Dwaine & Judith Berger, Glee Domschot, Lorna Bluhm

In memory of Norman Gardner, given by Aldora Kjaer, Fred & Terri Bursch, Family & Friends

In honor of pastors Greg, Kari and Ben, given by Harold & Cynthia Losch

FEED MY SHEEP

In memory of Elsie Platto, given by Mary Norlien

In memory of Dan Zismer, given by Lois Wambheim, Mike & Barb Golden, Steve & Kathy Haug, Jenny Trumm

In memory of John Schroeder, given by Steve & Kathy Haug

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY

In memory of Pat Perkins, given by Bret & Karen Brazel

In memory of Shari Widmark, given by James & Phyllis Norton

In memory of Hunter Schultz, given by Bret & Karen Brazel, Greg & Val Trumm

In memory of Harry Oberg, given by Lois Wambheim and Family & Friends

In memory of Steve Johnson, given by Curtis & Jodi Bitzan

In honor of Brady, Steph, Grant's & Kyle's Baptisms, given by JaneMarie Hennen

COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL

In memory of John Schroeder, given by Curt & Bonnie Thorfinnson

UNDESIGNATED

In memory of Tim Radil, given by Lu Johnson, Orin & Lois Lundberg, Richard & Sandy Telander, Marjorie Van Gorp

In memory of Jenny Quam's mother, given by Bret & Karen Brazel

In memory of Elsie Platto, given by Robert & Joanne Kensinger

In memory of Tim Radil, given by Bret & Karen Brazel

In memory of Oscar Pederson, given by Patricia Pederson

In memory of Hunter Schultz, given by David & Carla Setterstrom

In memory of Dan Zismer, given by Richard & Sandy Telander

In memory of Harry Oberg, given by Bret & Karen Brazel

In memory of John Schroeder, given by Rich & Kathy Moen, Dennis & Corliss Stark, The Glaesemann's, Claudia Bursch, Richard & Joanne Haugen, Roger & Sheryl Bakewell, Lyle & Rebecca Nelson

RADIO SPONSORSHIP

In memory of Dave Heinrich, given by Sharon Heinrich

In memory of Ike Rindelaub, given by Vivian Rindelaub

In memory of Elsie Platto, given by Allen & Coty Lund

In memory of Tim Radil, given by Audrey Gustafson, Jean Schmidt, Jan Kalina, Kathy & Vinal Franson, Norman & Audriene Kvitek, Gracie Lewis

In memory of Ron Domschot, given by Glee Domschot & Family

In memory of Alfred & Bryan Garmon, given by Pauleen Garmon

In memory of Dan Zismer, given by Linda Zismer, Ruth

Amundson, Corky & Joanne Krogstad, Angie Rustand, Tim Kato, Roxann Severson, Pat Johnson, Sue Johnson, Craig & Becky Collison, David & Theresa Hagene, Bette & Jerry Lund, Gerry & Suzanne Avery

In memory of Larry Johnson, given by Sue Johnson

In memory of Dan Ness, given by DiAnn Ness & Family

In memory of Pauline & Herman Schultz, given by Warren & Pauline Olson, Judy & Clark Hoffman, Roger & Ruthie Schultz, Marie Daugherty, George & Linda Schultz

In memory of Robert Hocum, given by Sheryl Hocum & Family

In memory of Milo Widmark, given by Junnell Widmark & Family

In memory of Marvin Iverson, given by Richard & Eileen Eiser

In memory of Al & Esther Shultz and Kathy Shultz Thorwaldsen, given by Dave Schultz

UPCOMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE

*To see our church calendar with full details and descriptions of all church events, please visit our website:
www.firstlutheranalexandria/events.*

MARCH EVENTS

- 3/2: Grief Support Gathering
- 3/4: 9th-12th Breakfast
- 3/6: World Day of Prayer
- 3/8: Daylight Savings
- 3/12: Men's Breakfast
- 3/12: Baptism Class
- 3/13: Contemplative Prayer
- 3/17: Senior Coffee
- 3/17: Mission Quilters
- 3/18: 9th-12th Breakfast
- 3/20-21: Pre-Marriage Counseling
- 3/20: Contemplative Prayer
- 3/27: Contemplative Prayer

APRIL EVENTS

- 4/1: 9th-12th Breakfast
- 4/2: WELCA Luncheon
- 4/3: Contemplative Prayer
- 4/5: Palm Sunday
- 4/6: Grief Support Gathering
- 4/8: No programming
- 4/8: No worship or meal
- 4/9: Men's Breakfast
- 4/9: Maundy Thursday
- 4/10: Good Friday
- 4/11: Easter Worship
- 4/12: Easter Worship
- 4/13: Church Building Closed
- 4/15: 9th-12th Breakfast
- 4/21: Senior Coffee
- 4/21: Mission Quilters
- 4/29: Last day of children & youth programming

MAY EVENTS

- 5/4 Grief Support Gathering
- 5/6: 9th-12th Breakfast
- 5/7: WELCA Luncheon
- 5/7: Heritage Writing Workshop
- 5/10: Mother's Day
- 5/13: Community Picnic
- 5/14: Men's Breakfast
- 5/14: Baptism Class
- 5/16-20: *Beyond the Building* commitment week
- 5/17: Graduation Milestone
- 5/19: Senior Coffee
- 5/19: Mission Quilters
- 5/20: 9th-12th Breakfast
- 5/20: Last day of Wednesday worship
- 5/24: Outdoor worship begins
- 5/25: Church Building Closed